

## FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- ~ Please do not feed wildlife in parks or anywhere else.
- ~ Do not touch young animals. An animal that appears orphaned is usually not.
- ~ Teach children not to feed, play with, or pet wild animals.
- ~ Learn how to make your own backyard a wildlife habitat.

## NOTICE:

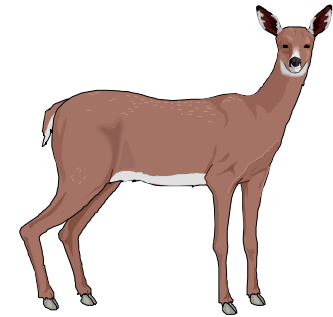
**State law prohibits all feeding of wild white-tailed deer in New York State. Violation can result in fines and/or imprisonment.**

**FOR YOUR SAFETY AND  
THE DEER'S SAFETY,  
THIS STATE LAW WILL BE  
ENFORCED!**

(6NYCRR Part 189 Chap 1)



## DON'T FEED THE WILDLIFE



**Allow Wildlife to  
Stay Wild....**

**Observe and  
Appreciate Us  
From a Distance**



**Steven Bellone**  
County Executive

A wild animal's survival depends on its ability to make use of natural foods. Unfortunately, many people feed wildlife. Feeding wild animals such as geese, ducks, deer, raccoons, squirrels, etc., is not healthy for the animal or the environment. Feeding wildlife can cause malnutrition, disease, environmental quality problems, and wildlife/human conflicts.

### **MALNUTRITION**

Handouts of food, even those we consider to be healthy, rarely meet all the nutritional needs of wildlife. In fact, handouts may cause many animals to gather and remain in a small area. As a result, wildlife deplete the healthy natural foods in that area, leaving less nutritious food to eat. By not feeding the wildlife, you help to protect the health of the animals as well as their food supply.



### **DISEASE**

Crowding and competition for food, combined with the stresses of less nutritious food, can increase the susceptibility of individual animals to diseases and parasites. This is

especially true with waterfowl, with many cases of botulism documented in New York.

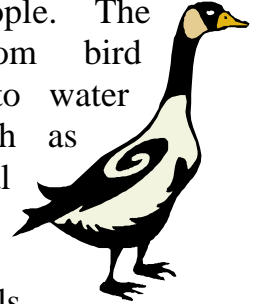
Concentrating mammals such as raccoons and foxes, by feeding them can spread diseases such as distemper, mange, and rabies. Feeding deer puts them at risk for contracting and spreading chronic wasting disease, that causes neurodegeneration. These diseases result in slow, agonizing death for the infected animals. Many wildlife diseases can be transmitted to pets, and some to humans, such as rabies and raccoon roundworms.

People who feed wildlife risk being bitten. Bites can cause substantial injury and trauma. There is risk of a person becoming infected with rabies if bitten or scratched by a rabid animal. If left untreated, rabies is fatal.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY PROBLEMS**

Feeding wildlife such as ducks and geese can lead to overcrowding in an area. When birds feed on scattered bread, they defecate in the same place they eat. More birds mean more droppings. The excess feces can result in land and water pollution. In addition to being harmful to the birds,

the unnatural number of bird droppings can create an unsanitary environment for people. The excess nutrients from bird droppings can lead to water quality problems such as excessive summer algal blooms, which can reduce water oxygen levels and cause fish kills.



### **WILDLIFE/HUMAN CONFLICTS**

Animals that are fed lose their fear of people and develop unnatural behaviors and habits, which result in conflicts with humans. Wildlife that have lost their natural fear of humans are more likely to cause nuisance problems. Feeding of wildlife attracts them to residential areas, exposing them to harassment or attacks by family pets. Deer can cause extensive damage to landscape plantings.

Concentration of animals along roadways caused by feeding can be a hazard to motorists. Animals fed from vehicles lose their natural fear of them and may even approach or chase cars when seeking food. Obviously such animals have a greater risk of being struck by a vehicle.

